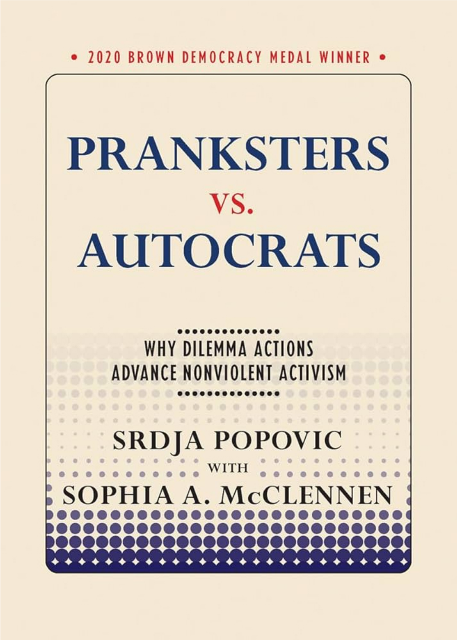
DISOBEDIENCE AS ACTIVISM: FURTHER READING

BOOK RECOMENDATIONS, SOURCES, AND MORE:



• 2020 BROWN DEMOCRACY MEDAL WINNER •

PRANKSTERS
VS.
AUTOCRATS

WHY DILEMMA ACTIONS
ADVANCE NONVIOLENT ACTIVISM

SRDJA POPOVIC
WITH
SOPHIA A. McCLENNEN

Pranksters Vs. Autocrats - Why Dilemma Actions Advance Nonviolent Acvitism

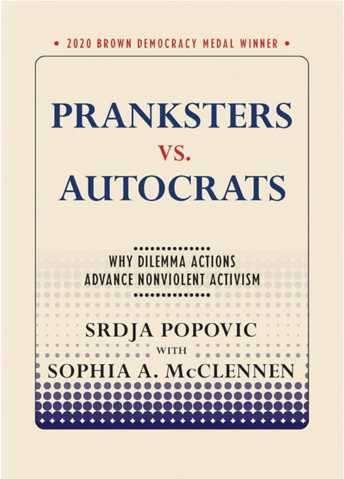
The Lawrence and Lynne Brown Democracy Medal, presented by the McCourtney Institute for Democracy at Penn State, recognizes outstanding individuals, groups, and organizations that produce innovations to further democracy in the United States or around the world.
The 2020 Brown Democracy Medal winner, Srdja Popovic, was a leader in the revolution that brought down the Milošević regime in Serbia and he continues to help protestors around the world learn effective, sometimes humorous, nonviolent tactics. In 2020, he teamed up with Sophia A. McClennen to study the concept of "dilemma actions," which offers a structured, strategic approach to fighting back against authoritarianism, as well as for defending democracy.

THIS BOOK IS FREE FOR DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

https://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/9781501756061/pranksters-vs-autocrats/#bookTabs=1

FREE FOR DOWNLOAD AT THIS LINK AND INCLUDED WITH THE GLUE MAN "DISOBEDIENCE AS ACTIVISM" COLLECTION ON ARCHIVE.ORG FOR DOWNLOAD!!!

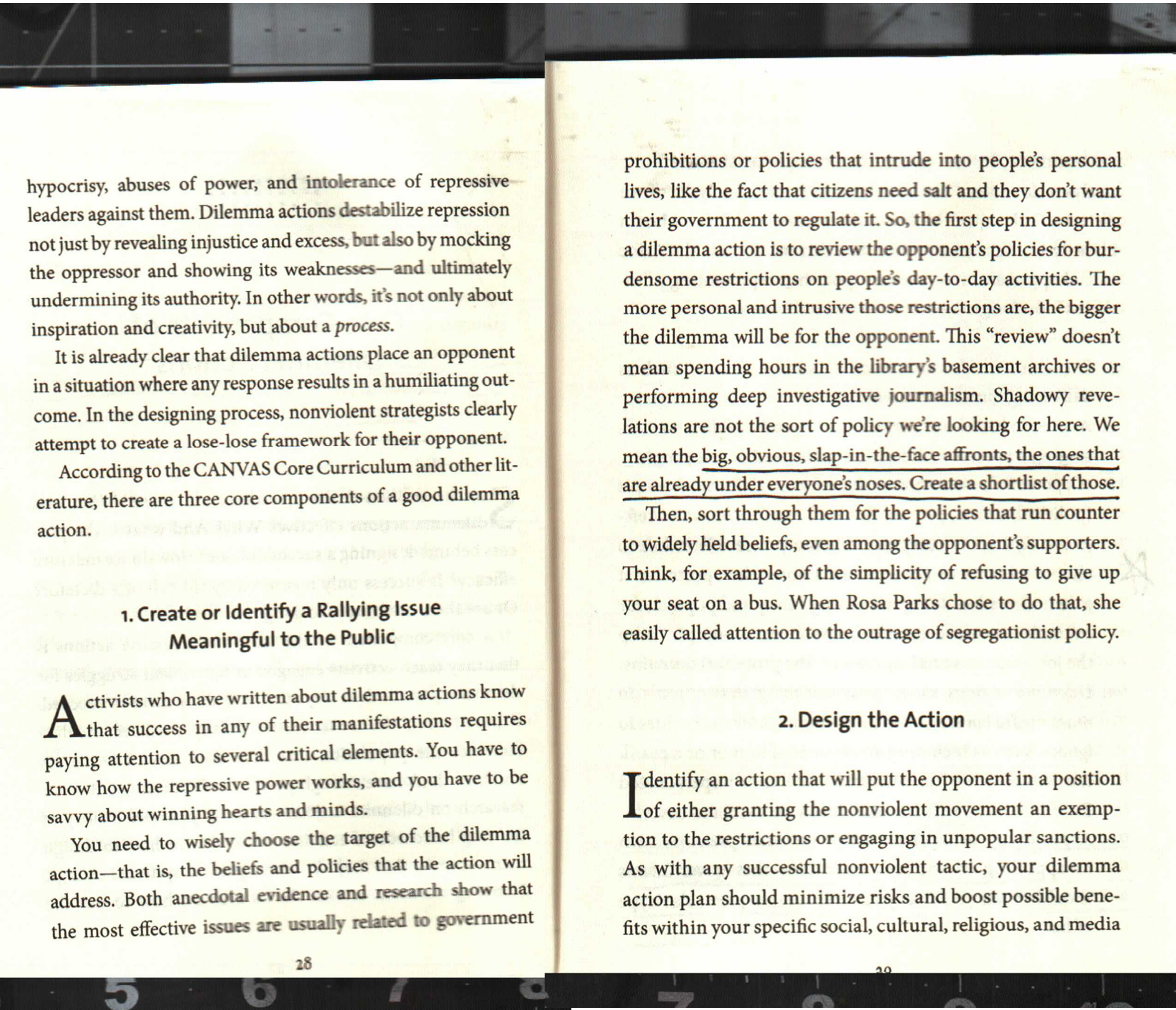
EXCERPT 1:
“CORE COMPONENTS OF DILEMMA ACTIONS”
page 1


• 2020 BROWN DEMOCRACY MEDAL WINNER •

PRANKSTERS
VS.
AUTOCRATS

WHY DILEMMA ACTIONS
ADVANCE NONVIOLENT ACTIVISM

SRDJA POPOVIC
WITH
SOPHIA A. McCLENNEN


hypocrisy, abuses of power, and intolerance of repressive leaders against them. Dilemma actions destabilize repression not just by revealing injustice and excess, but also by mocking the oppressor and showing its weaknesses—and ultimately undermining its authority. In other words, it's not only about inspiration and creativity, but about a *process*.

It is already clear that dilemma actions place an opponent in a situation where any response results in a humiliating outcome. In the designing process, nonviolent strategists clearly attempt to create a lose-lose framework for their opponent.

According to the CANVAS Core Curriculum and other literature, there are three core components of a good dilemma action.

1. Create or Identify a Rallying Issue Meaningful to the Public

Activists who have written about dilemma actions know that success in any of their manifestations requires paying attention to several critical elements. You have to know how the repressive power works, and you have to be savvy about winning hearts and minds.

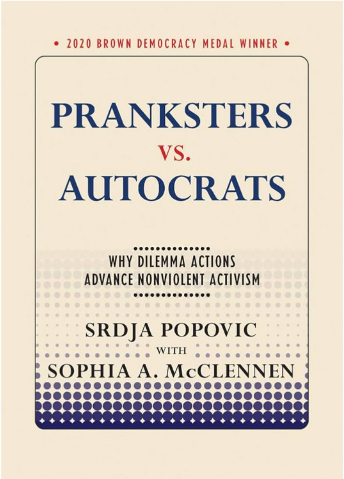
You need to wisely choose the target of the dilemma action—that is, the beliefs and policies that the action will address. Both anecdotal evidence and research show that the most effective issues are usually related to government prohibitions or policies that intrude into people's personal lives, like the fact that citizens need salt and they don't want their government to regulate it. So, the first step in designing a dilemma action is to review the opponent's policies for burdensome restrictions on people's day-to-day activities. The more personal and intrusive those restrictions are, the bigger the dilemma will be for the opponent. This “review” doesn't mean spending hours in the library's basement archives or performing deep investigative journalism. Shadowy revelations are not the sort of policy we're looking for here. We mean the big, obvious, slap-in-the-face affronts, the ones that are already under everyone's noses. Create a shortlist of those.

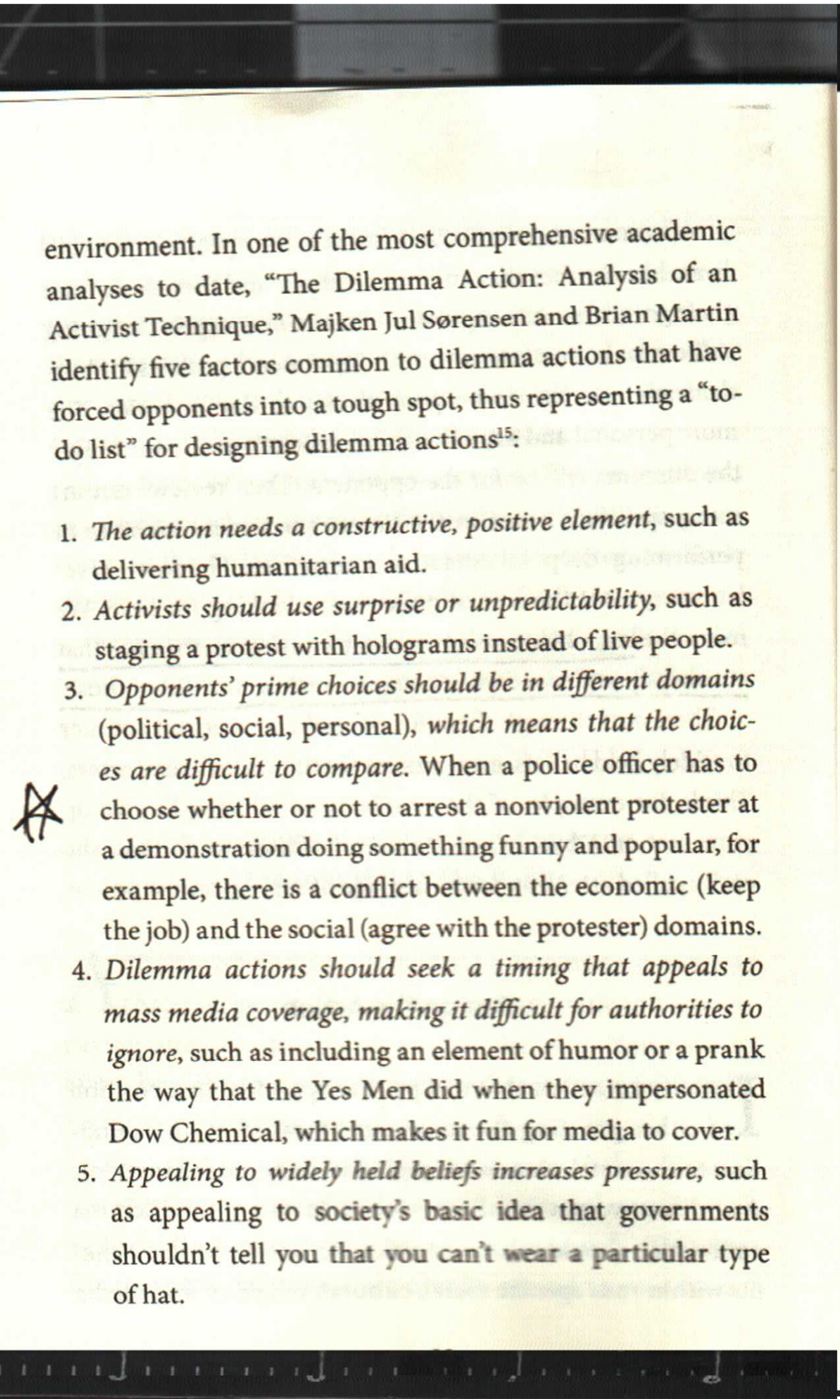
Then, sort through them for the policies that run counter to widely held beliefs, even among the opponent's supporters. Think, for example, of the simplicity of refusing to give up your seat on a bus. When Rosa Parks chose to do that, she easily called attention to the outrage of segregationist policy.

2. Design the Action

Identify an action that will put the opponent in a position of either granting the nonviolent movement an exemption to the restrictions or engaging in unpopular sanctions. As with any successful nonviolent tactic, your dilemma action plan should minimize risks and boost possible benefits within your specific social, cultural, religious, and media

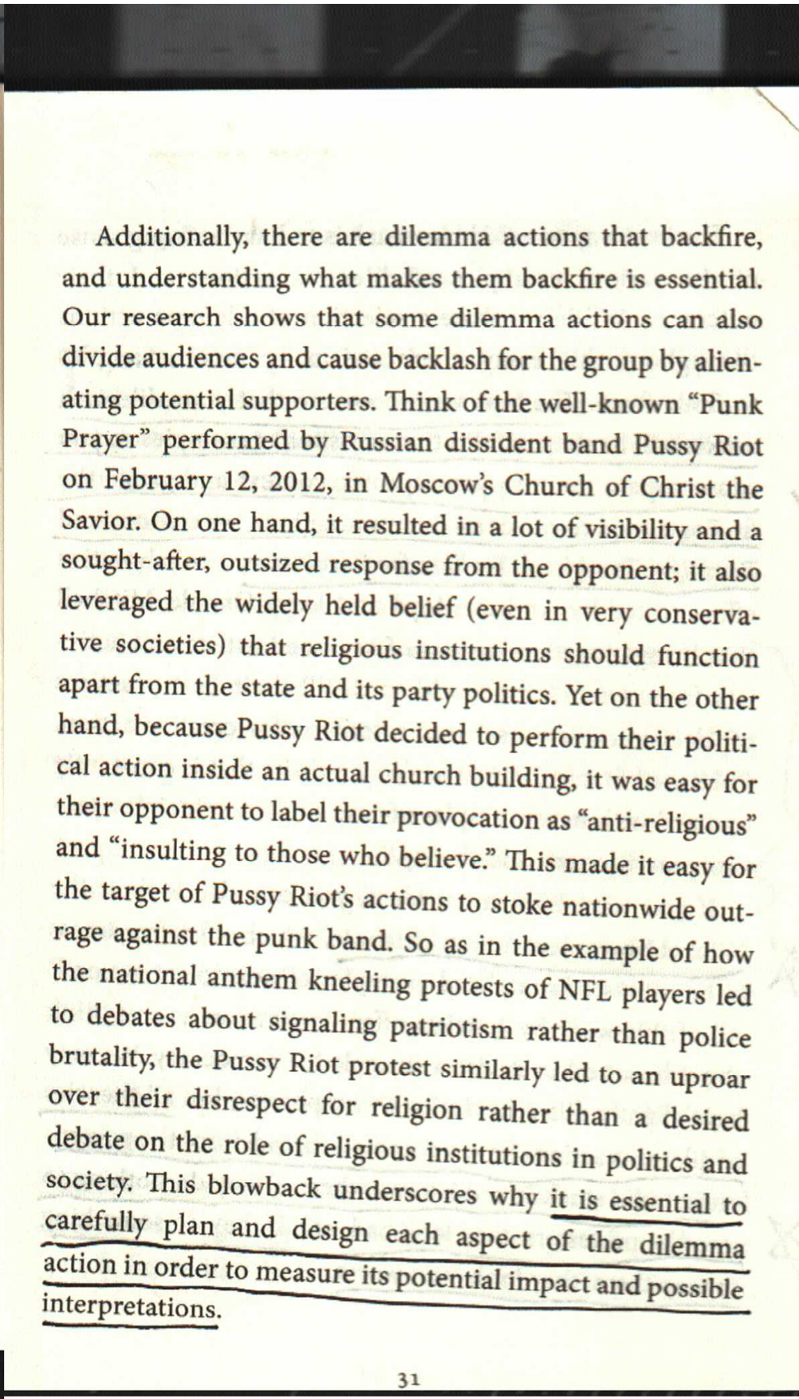
EXCERPT 1: "CORE COMPONENTS OF DILEMMA ACTIONS"
page 2





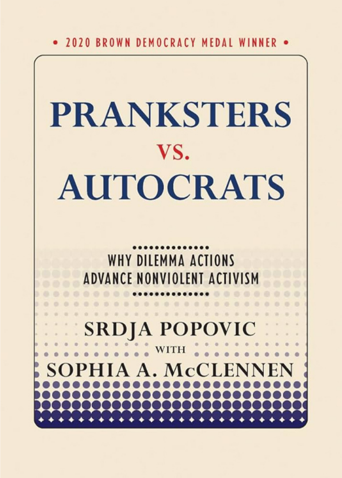
environment. In one of the most comprehensive academic analyses to date, "The Dilemma Action: Analysis of an Activist Technique," Majken Jul Sørensen and Brian Martin identify five factors common to dilemma actions that have forced opponents into a tough spot, thus representing a "to-do list" for designing dilemma actions[15]:

1. *The action needs a constructive, positive element*, such as delivering humanitarian aid.
2. *Activists should use surprise or unpredictability*, such as staging a protest with holograms instead of live people.
3. *Opponents' prime choices should be in different domains* (political, social, personal), *which means that the choices are difficult to compare*. When a police officer has to choose whether or not to arrest a nonviolent protester at a demonstration doing something funny and popular, for example, there is a conflict between the economic (keep the job) and the social (agree with the protester) domains.
4. *Dilemma actions should seek a timing that appeals to mass media coverage, making it difficult for authorities to ignore*, such as including an element of humor or a prank the way that the Yes Men did when they impersonated Dow Chemical, which makes it fun for media to cover.
5. *Appealing to widely held beliefs increases pressure*, such as appealing to society's basic idea that governments shouldn't tell you that you can't wear a particular type of hat.



Additionally, there are dilemma actions that backfire, and understanding what makes them backfire is essential. Our research shows that some dilemma actions can also divide audiences and cause backlash for the group by alienating potential supporters. Think of the well-known "Punk Prayer" performed by Russian dissident band Pussy Riot on February 12, 2012, in Moscow's Church of Christ the Savior. On one hand, it resulted in a lot of visibility and a sought-after, outsized response from the opponent; it also leveraged the widely held belief (even in very conservative societies) that religious institutions should function apart from the state and its party politics. Yet on the other hand, because Pussy Riot decided to perform their political action inside an actual church building, it was easy for their opponent to label their provocation as "anti-religious" and "insulting to those who believe." This made it easy for the target of Pussy Riot's actions to stoke nationwide outrage against the punk band. So as in the example of how the national anthem kneeling protests of NFL players led to debates about signaling patriotism rather than police brutality, the Pussy Riot protest similarly led to an uproar over their disrespect for religion rather than a desired debate on the role of religious institutions in politics and society. This blowback underscores why it is essential to carefully plan and design each aspect of the dilemma action in order to measure its potential impact and possible interpretations.

EXCERPT 1: "CORE COMPONENTS OF DILEMMA ACTIONS"
page 3

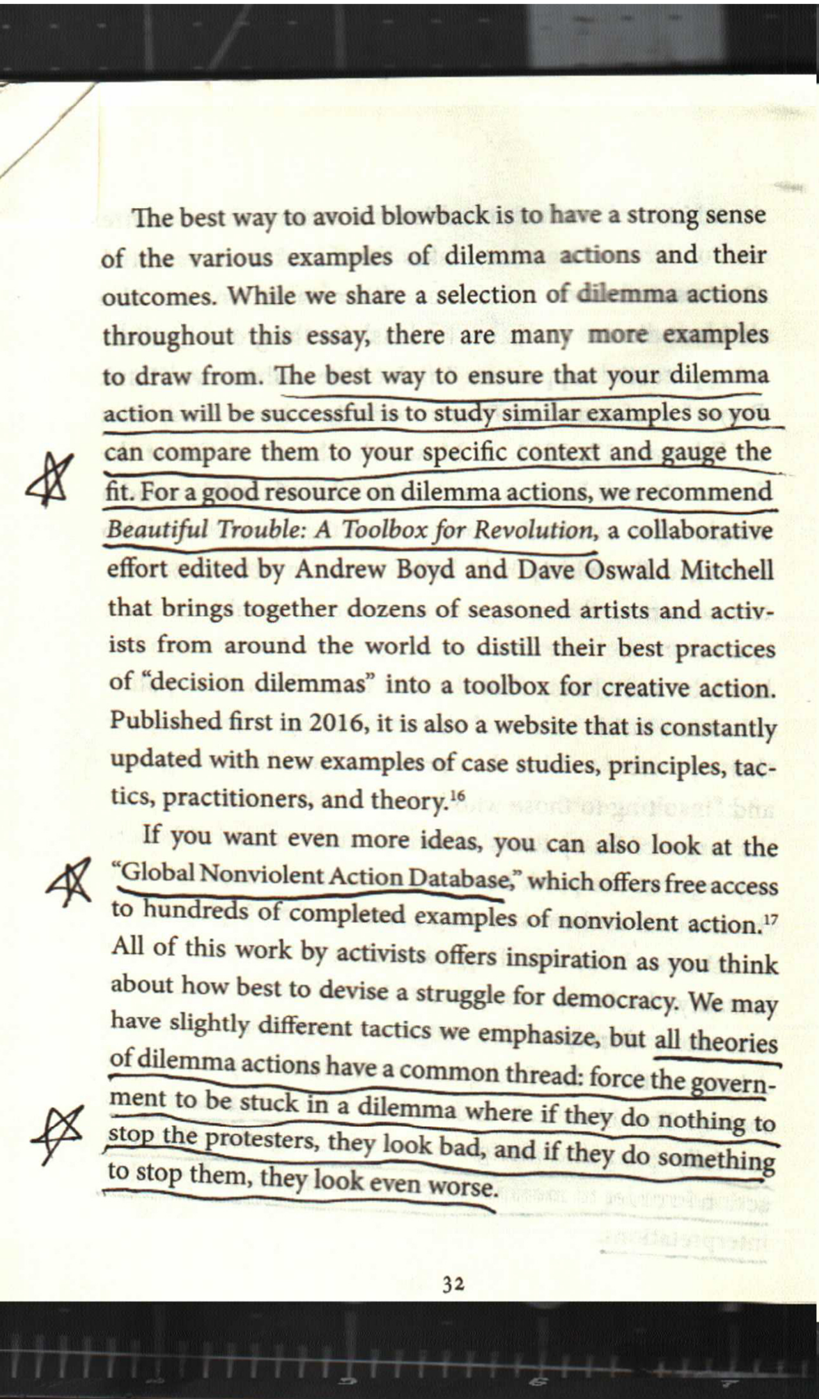


• 2020 BROWN DEMOCRACY MEDAL WINNER •

PRANKSTERS
vs.
AUTOCRATS

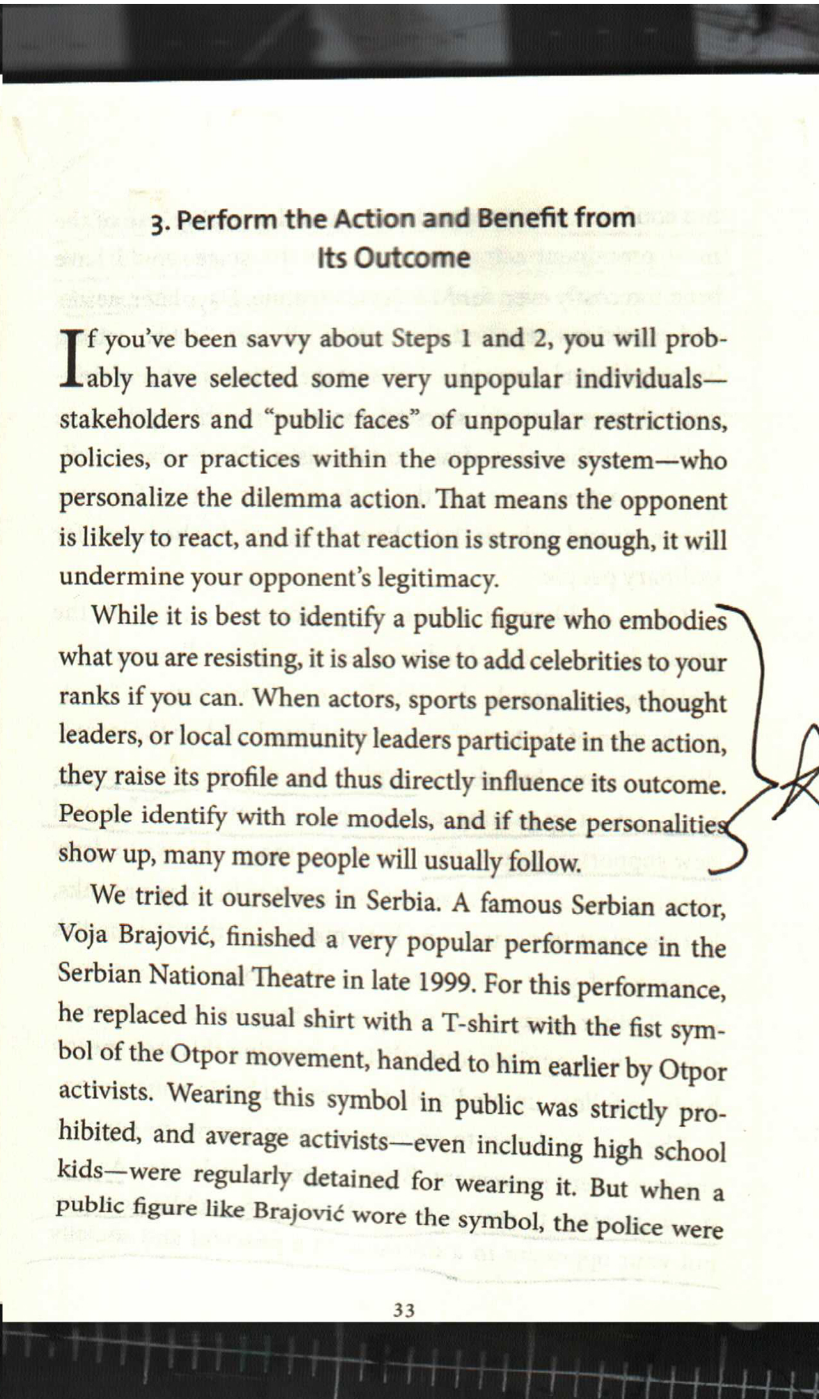
WHY DILEMMA ACTIONS
ADVANCE NONVIOLENT ACTIVISM

SRDJA POPOVIC
WITH
SOPHIA A. McCLENNEN



The best way to avoid blowback is to have a strong sense of the various examples of dilemma actions and their outcomes. While we share a selection of dilemma actions throughout this essay, there are many more examples to draw from. The best way to ensure that your dilemma action will be successful is to study similar examples so you can compare them to your specific context and gauge the fit. For a good resource on dilemma actions, we recommend *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution*, a collaborative effort edited by Andrew Boyd and Dave Oswald Mitchell that brings together dozens of seasoned artists and activists from around the world to distill their best practices of "decision dilemmas" into a toolbox for creative action. Published first in 2016, it is also a website that is constantly updated with new examples of case studies, principles, tactics, practitioners, and theory.[16]

If you want even more ideas, you can also look at the "Global Nonviolent Action Database," which offers free access to hundreds of completed examples of nonviolent action.[17] All of this work by activists offers inspiration as you think about how best to devise a struggle for democracy. We may have slightly different tactics we emphasize, but all theories of dilemma actions have a common thread: force the government to be stuck in a dilemma where if they do nothing to stop the protesters, they look bad, and if they do something to stop them, they look even worse.



3. Perform the Action and Benefit from Its Outcome

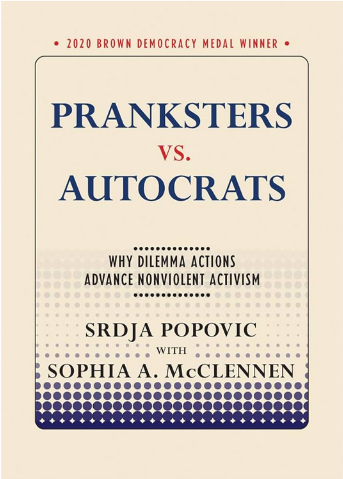
If you've been savvy about Steps 1 and 2, you will probably have selected some very unpopular individuals—stakeholders and "public faces" of unpopular restrictions, policies, or practices within the oppressive system—who personalize the dilemma action. That means the opponent is likely to react, and if that reaction is strong enough, it will undermine your opponent's legitimacy.

While it is best to identify a public figure who embodies what you are resisting, it is also wise to add celebrities to your ranks if you can. When actors, sports personalities, thought leaders, or local community leaders participate in the action, they raise its profile and thus directly influence its outcome. People identify with role models, and if these personalities show up, many more people will usually follow.

We tried it ourselves in Serbia. A famous Serbian actor, Voja Brajović, finished a very popular performance in the Serbian National Theatre in late 1999. For this performance, he replaced his usual shirt with a T-shirt with the fist symbol of the Otpor movement, handed to him earlier by Otpor activists. Wearing this symbol in public was strictly prohibited, and average activists—even including high school kids—were regularly detained for wearing it. But when a public figure like Brajović wore the symbol, the police were

EXCERPT 1: “CORE COMPONENTS OF DILEMMA ACTIONS”

page 4

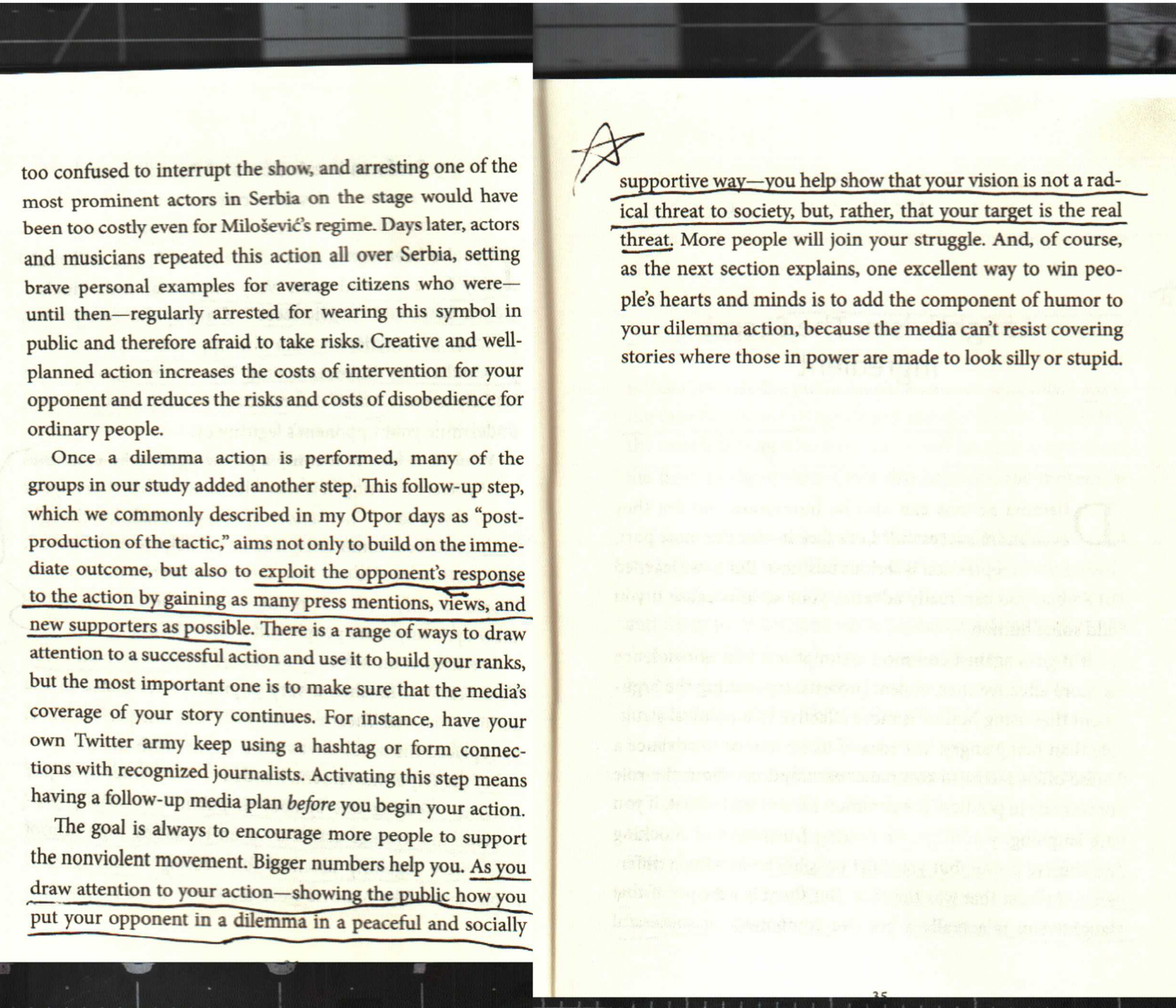


• 2020 BROWN DEMOCRACY MEDAL WINNER •

PRANKSTERS
VS.
AUTOCRATS

WHY DILEMMA ACTIONS
ADVANCE NONVIOLENT ACTIVISM

SRDJA POPOVIC
WITH
SOPHIA A. McCLENNEN



too confused to interrupt the show, and arresting one of the most prominent actors in Serbia on the stage would have been too costly even for Milošević’s regime. Days later, actors and musicians repeated this action all over Serbia, setting brave personal examples for average citizens who were—until then—regularly arrested for wearing this symbol in public and therefore afraid to take risks. Creative and well-planned action increases the costs of intervention for your opponent and reduces the risks and costs of disobedience for ordinary people.

Once a dilemma action is performed, many of the groups in our study added another step. This follow-up step, which we commonly described in my Otpor days as “post-production of the tactic,” aims not only to build on the immediate outcome, but also to exploit the opponent’s response to the action by gaining as many press mentions, views, and new supporters as possible. There is a range of ways to draw attention to a successful action and use it to build your ranks, but the most important one is to make sure that the media’s coverage of your story continues. For instance, have your own Twitter army keep using a hashtag or form connections with recognized journalists. Activating this step means having a follow-up media plan *before* you begin your action.

The goal is always to encourage more people to support the nonviolent movement. Bigger numbers help you. As you draw attention to your action—showing the public how you put your opponent in a dilemma in a peaceful and socially supportive way—you help show that your vision is not a radical threat to society, but, rather, that your target is the real threat. More people will join your struggle. And, of course, as the next section explains, one excellent way to win people’s hearts and minds is to add the component of humor to your dilemma action, because the media can’t resist covering stories where those in power are made to look silly or stupid.

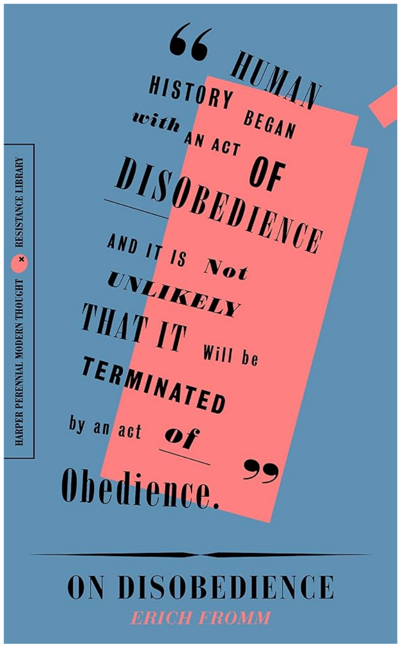
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS, SOURCES AND IDEAS:

READ ABOUT THE RUSSIAN TOY PROTESTING DILEMMA ACTION:

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/15/toys-protest-not-citizens-russia

GET INSPIRED BY AND READ MORE ABOUT "BLACK BLOC" PROTESTS, THEIR VISUAL UNISON PROTECTS CITIZENS IDENTITIES AND CREATES POWERFUL IMAGERY.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_bloc


"HUMAN HISTORY BEGAN with AN ACT OF DISOBEDIENCE AND IT IS Not UNLIKELY THAT IT Will be TERMINATED by an act of Obedience."
HARPER PERENNIAL MODERN THOUGHT × RESISTANCE LIBRARY
ON DISOBEDIENCE
ERICH FROMM

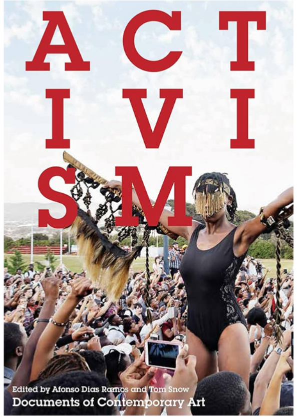
IF YOU ARE ABLE TO GET YOUR HANDS ON A COPY OF ERICH FROMM'S "ON DISOBEDIENCE: WHY FREEDOM MEANS SAYING NO TO POWER" IT IS A FANTASTIC ESSAY ON DISOBEDIENCE THROUGHOUT HUMAN HISTORY WHILE FOCUSING ON THE 20TH CENTURY.

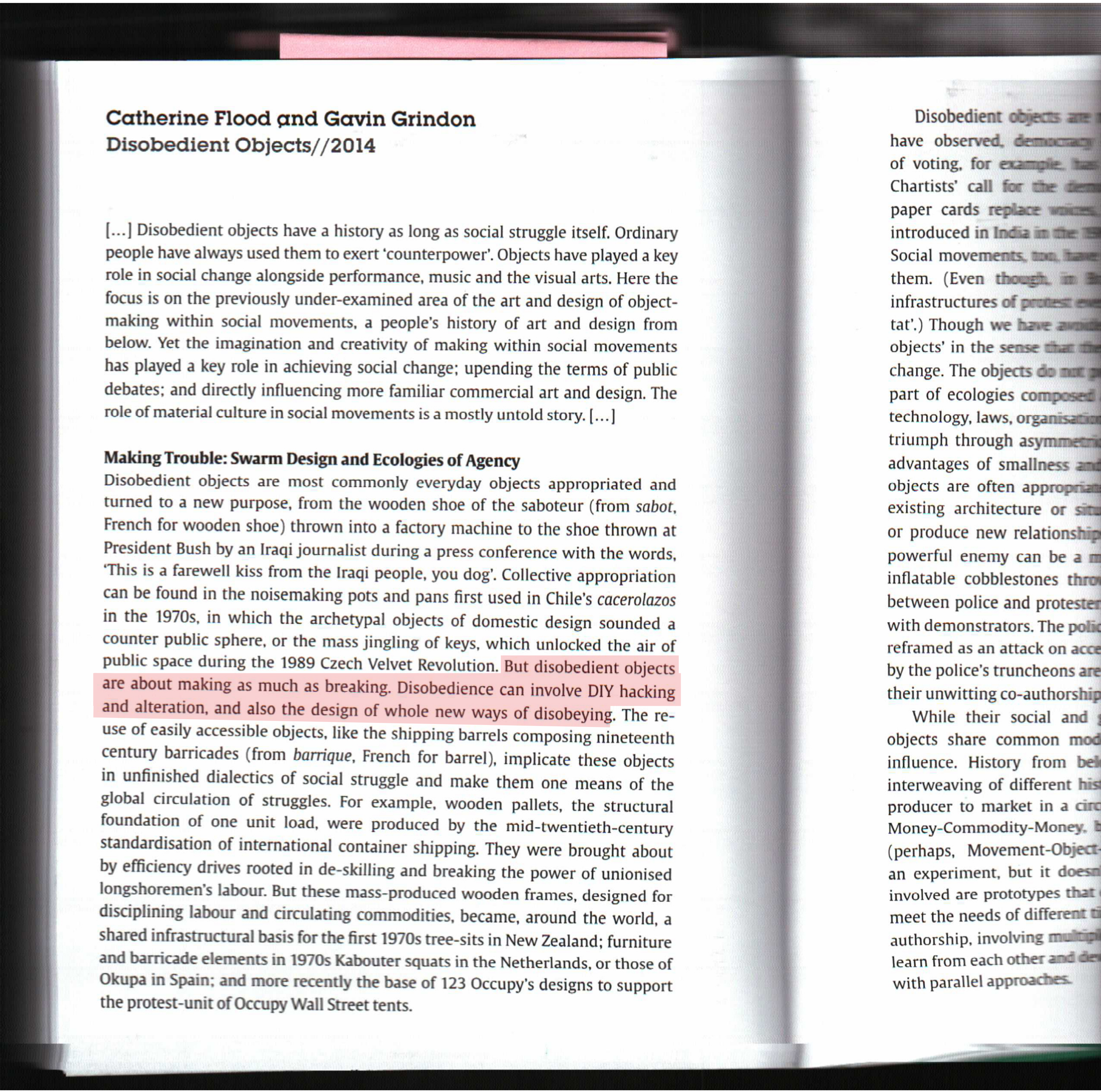
IT IS A PART OF THE HAPER PERENNIAL RESISTANCE LIBRARY, A SELECTION OF WORKS FOCUSED ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF RESISTANCE TO AUTHORITARIANISM AND THE DANGERS OF MEDIA AND MASS COMMUNICATION--ALL ARE FANTASTIC WORKS AND I WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND YOU CHECK THEM OUT IF YOU CAN.

SHORT READS AND HIGHLY INSPIRATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL.

EXCERPT 2: “DISOBEDIENT OBJECTS”

page 1


ACT
IVI
SM
Edited by Afonso Dias Ramos and Tom Snow
Documents of Contemporary Art



Catherine Flood and Gavin Grindon

Disobedient Objects//2014

[...] Disobedient objects have a history as long as social struggle itself. Ordinary people have always used them to exert 'counterpower'. Objects have played a key role in social change alongside performance, music and the visual arts. Here the focus is on the previously under-examined area of the art and design of object-making within social movements, a people's history of art and design from below. Yet the imagination and creativity of making within social movements has played a key role in achieving social change; upending the terms of public debates; and directly influencing more familiar commercial art and design. The role of material culture in social movements is a mostly untold story. [...]

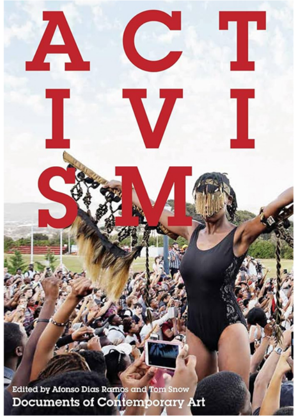
Making Trouble: Swarm Design and Ecologies of Agency

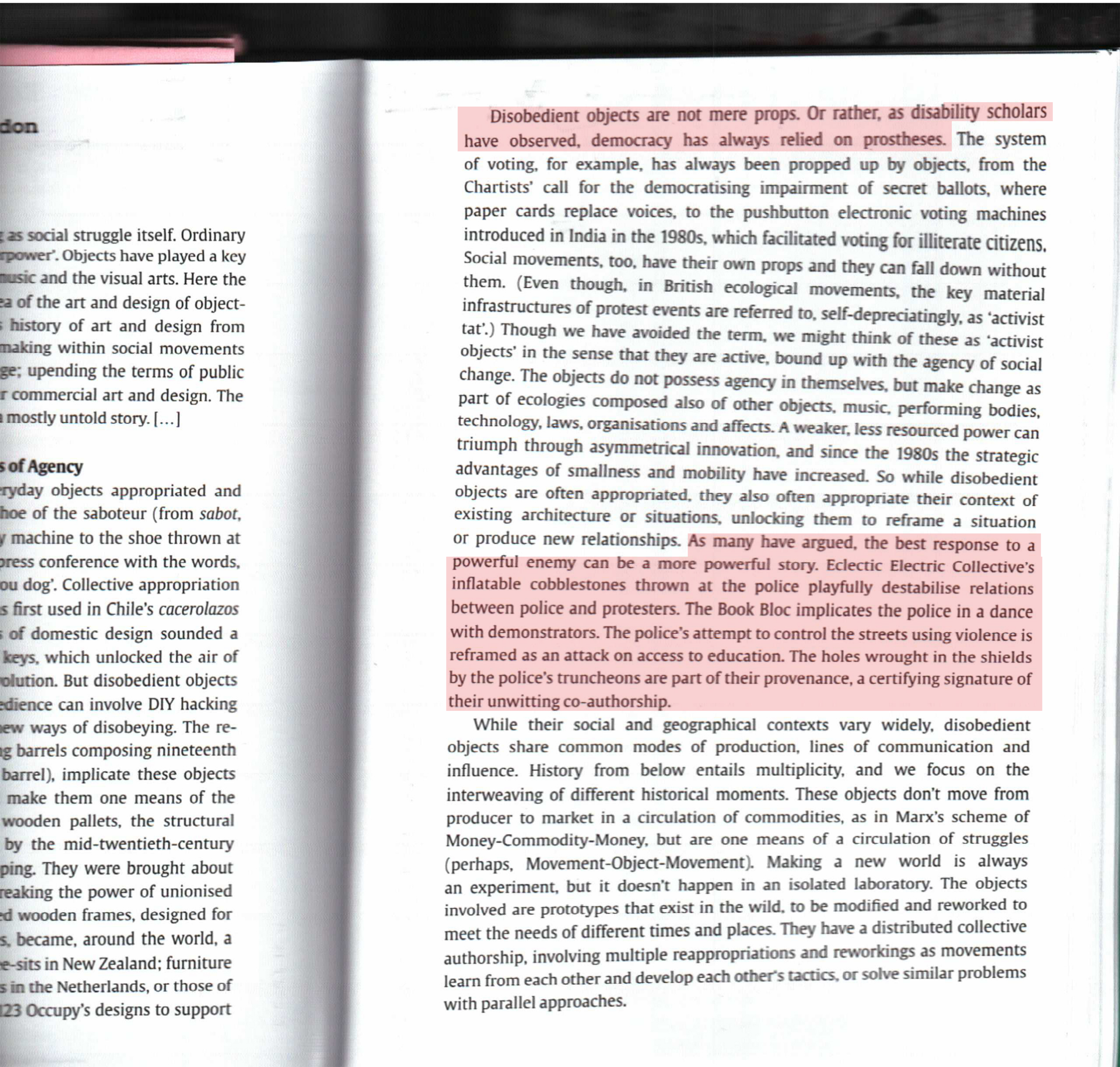
Disobedient objects are most commonly everyday objects appropriated and turned to a new purpose, from the wooden shoe of the saboteur (from *sabot*, French for wooden shoe) thrown into a factory machine to the shoe thrown at President Bush by an Iraqi journalist during a press conference with the words, 'This is a farewell kiss from the Iraqi people, you dog'. Collective appropriation can be found in the noisemaking pots and pans first used in Chile's *cacerolazos* in the 1970s, in which the archetypal objects of domestic design sounded a counter public sphere, or the mass jingling of keys, which unlocked the air of public space during the 1989 Czech Velvet Revolution. But disobedient objects are about making as much as breaking. Disobedience can involve DIY hacking and alteration, and also the design of whole new ways of disobeying. The re-use of easily accessible objects, like the shipping barrels composing nineteenth century barricades (from *barrique*, French for barrel), implicate these objects in unfinished dialectics of social struggle and make them one means of the global circulation of struggles. For example, wooden pallets, the structural foundation of one unit load, were produced by the mid-twentieth-century standardisation of international container shipping. They were brought about by efficiency drives rooted in de-skilling and breaking the power of unionised longshoremen's labour. But these mass-produced wooden frames, designed for disciplining labour and circulating commodities, became, around the world, a shared infrastructural basis for the first 1970s tree-sits in New Zealand; furniture and barricade elements in 1970s Kabouter squats in the Netherlands, or those of Okupa in Spain; and more recently the base of 123 Occupy's designs to support the protest-unit of Occupy Wall Street tents.

Disobedient objects are
have observed, democracy
of voting, for example, has
Chartists' call for the dem
paper cards replace voices,
introduced in India in the
Social movements, too, have
them. (Even though, in
infrastructures of protest
tat'.) Though we have avoid
objects' in the sense that the
change. The objects do not
part of ecologies composed
technology, laws, organisatio
triumph through asymmetri
advantages of smallness and
objects are often appropria
existing architecture or
or produce new relationship
powerful enemy can be a
inflatable cobblestones thro
between police and proteste
with demonstrators. The polic
reframed as an attack on acce
by the police's truncheons are
their unwitting co-authorship

While their social and
objects share common mod
influence. History from be
interweaving of different his
producer to market in a circ
Money-Commodity-Money,
(perhaps, Movement-Object
an experiment, but it doesn
involved are prototypes that
meet the needs of different
authorship, involving multip
learn from each other and de
with parallel approaches.

EXCERPT 2:
"DISOBEDIENT OBJECTS"
page 2


ACTIVISM
Edited by Afonso Dias Ramos and Tom Snow
Documents of Contemporary Art



don

g as social struggle itself. Ordinary
rpower'. Objects have played a key
music and the visual arts. Here the
ea of the art and design of object-
s history of art and design from
making within social movements
ge; upending the terms of public
r commercial art and design. The
n mostly untold story. [...]

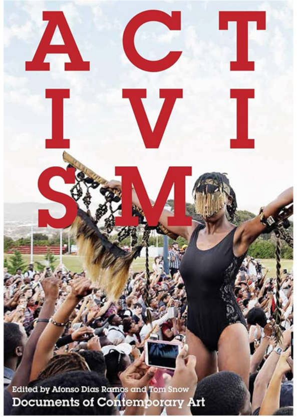
s of Agency

eryday objects appropriated and
hoe of the saboteur (from *sabot*,
y machine to the shoe thrown at
press conference with the words,
ou dog'. Collective appropriation
s first used in Chile's *cacerolazos*
s of domestic design sounded a
keys, which unlocked the air of
olution. But disobedient objects
edience can involve DIY hacking
ew ways of disobeying. The re-
g barrels composing nineteenth
barrel), implicate these objects
make them one means of the
wooden pallets, the structural
by the mid-twentieth-century
ping. They were brought about
reaking the power of unionised
d wooden frames, designed for
s, became, around the world, a
e-sits in New Zealand; furniture
s in the Netherlands, or those of
123 Occupy's designs to support

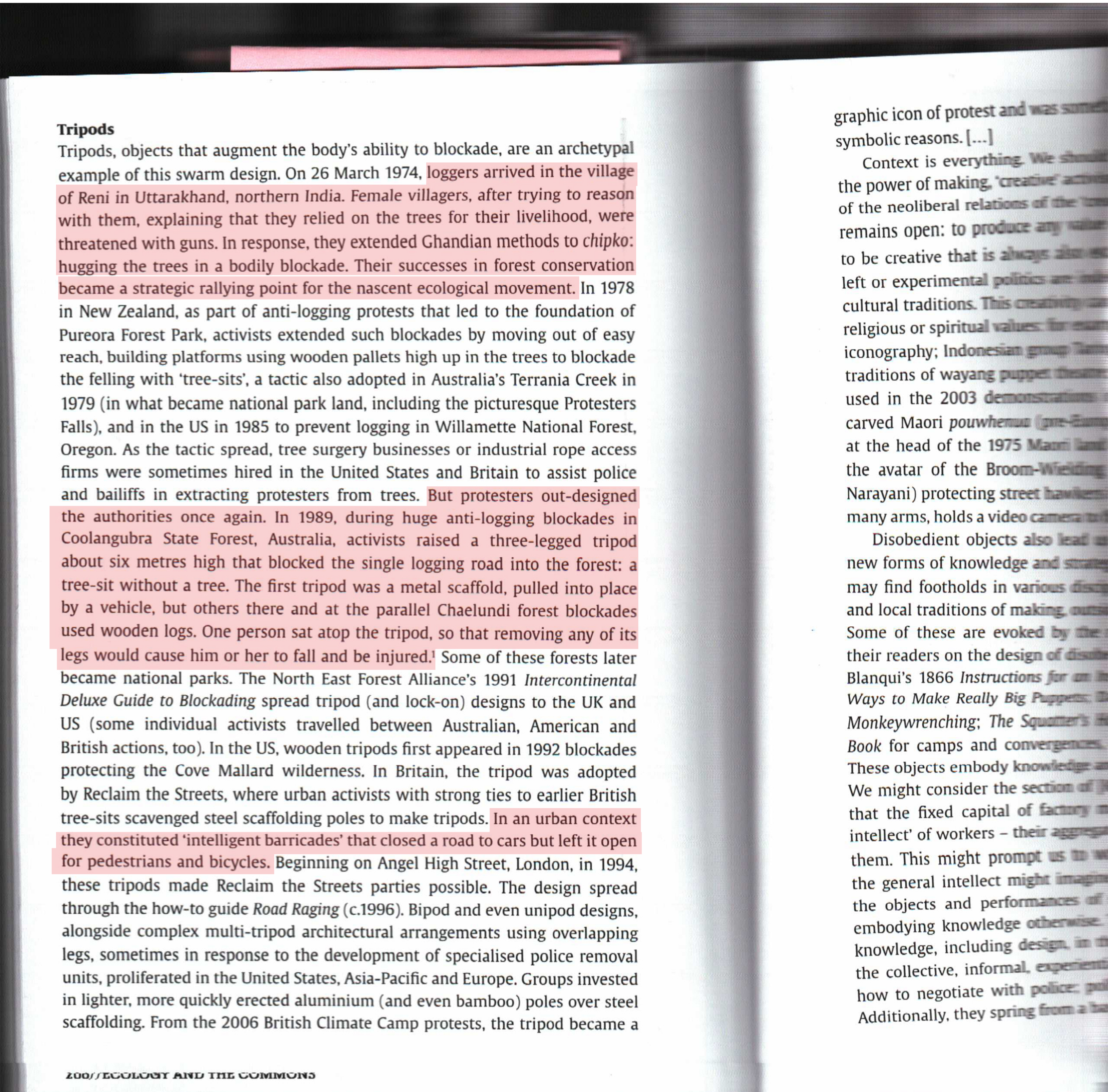
Disobedient objects are not mere props. Or rather, as disability scholars have observed, democracy has always relied on prostheses. The system of voting, for example, has always been propped up by objects, from the Chartists' call for the democratising impairment of secret ballots, where paper cards replace voices, to the pushbutton electronic voting machines introduced in India in the 1980s, which facilitated voting for illiterate citizens. Social movements, too, have their own props and they can fall down without them. (Even though, in British ecological movements, the key material infrastructures of protest events are referred to, self-depreciatingly, as 'activist tat'.) Though we have avoided the term, we might think of these as 'activist objects' in the sense that they are active, bound up with the agency of social change. The objects do not possess agency in themselves, but make change as part of ecologies composed also of other objects, music, performing bodies, technology, laws, organisations and affects. A weaker, less resourced power can triumph through asymmetrical innovation, and since the 1980s the strategic advantages of smallness and mobility have increased. So while disobedient objects are often appropriated, they also often appropriate their context of existing architecture or situations, unlocking them to reframe a situation or produce new relationships. As many have argued, the best response to a powerful enemy can be a more powerful story. Eclectic Electric Collective's inflatable cobblestones thrown at the police playfully destabilise relations between police and protesters. The Book Bloc implicates the police in a dance with demonstrators. The police's attempt to control the streets using violence is reframed as an attack on access to education. The holes wrought in the shields by the police's truncheons are part of their provenance, a certifying signature of their unwitting co-authorship.

While their social and geographical contexts vary widely, disobedient objects share common modes of production, lines of communication and influence. History from below entails multiplicity, and we focus on the interweaving of different historical moments. These objects don't move from producer to market in a circulation of commodities, as in Marx's scheme of Money-Commodity-Money, but are one means of a circulation of struggles (perhaps, Movement-Object-Movement). Making a new world is always an experiment, but it doesn't happen in an isolated laboratory. The objects involved are prototypes that exist in the wild, to be modified and reworked to meet the needs of different times and places. They have a distributed collective authorship, involving multiple reappropriations and reworkings as movements learn from each other and develop each other's tactics, or solve similar problems with parallel approaches.

EXCERPT 2: "DISOBEDIENT OBJECTS" page 3



Edited by Afonso Dias Ramos and Tom Snow
Documents of Contemporary Art



Tripods

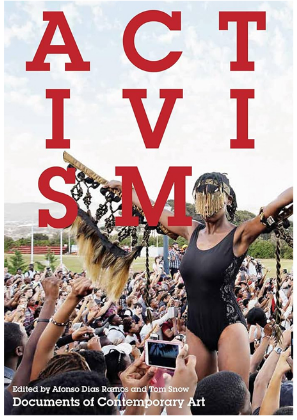
Tripods, objects that augment the body's ability to blockade, are an archetypal example of this swarm design. On 26 March 1974, loggers arrived in the village of Reni in Uttarakhand, northern India. Female villagers, after trying to reason with them, explaining that they relied on the trees for their livelihood, were threatened with guns. In response, they extended Ghandian methods to *chipko*: hugging the trees in a bodily blockade. Their successes in forest conservation became a strategic rallying point for the nascent ecological movement. In 1978 in New Zealand, as part of anti-logging protests that led to the foundation of Pureora Forest Park, activists extended such blockades by moving out of easy reach, building platforms using wooden pallets high up in the trees to blockade the felling with 'tree-sits', a tactic also adopted in Australia's Terrania Creek in 1979 (in what became national park land, including the picturesque Protesters Falls), and in the US in 1985 to prevent logging in Willamette National Forest, Oregon. As the tactic spread, tree surgery businesses or industrial rope access firms were sometimes hired in the United States and Britain to assist police and bailiffs in extracting protesters from trees. But protesters out-designed the authorities once again. In 1989, during huge anti-logging blockades in Coolangubra State Forest, Australia, activists raised a three-legged tripod about six metres high that blocked the single logging road into the forest: a tree-sit without a tree. The first tripod was a metal scaffold, pulled into place by a vehicle, but others there and at the parallel Chaelundi forest blockades used wooden logs. One person sat atop the tripod, so that removing any of its legs would cause him or her to fall and be injured.[1] Some of these forests later became national parks. The North East Forest Alliance's 1991 *Intercontinental Deluxe Guide to Blockading* spread tripod (and lock-on) designs to the UK and US (some individual activists travelled between Australian, American and British actions, too). In the US, wooden tripods first appeared in 1992 blockades protecting the Cove Mallard wilderness. In Britain, the tripod was adopted by Reclaim the Streets, where urban activists with strong ties to earlier British tree-sits scavenged steel scaffolding poles to make tripods. In an urban context they constituted 'intelligent barricades' that closed a road to cars but left it open for pedestrians and bicycles. Beginning on Angel High Street, London, in 1994, these tripods made Reclaim the Streets parties possible. The design spread through the how-to guide *Road Raging* (c.1996). Bipod and even unipod designs, alongside complex multi-tripod architectural arrangements using overlapping legs, sometimes in response to the development of specialised police removal units, proliferated in the United States, Asia-Pacific and Europe. Groups invested in lighter, more quickly erected aluminium (and even bamboo) poles over steel scaffolding. From the 2006 British Climate Camp protests, the tripod became a

graphic icon of protest and was
symbolic reasons. [...]

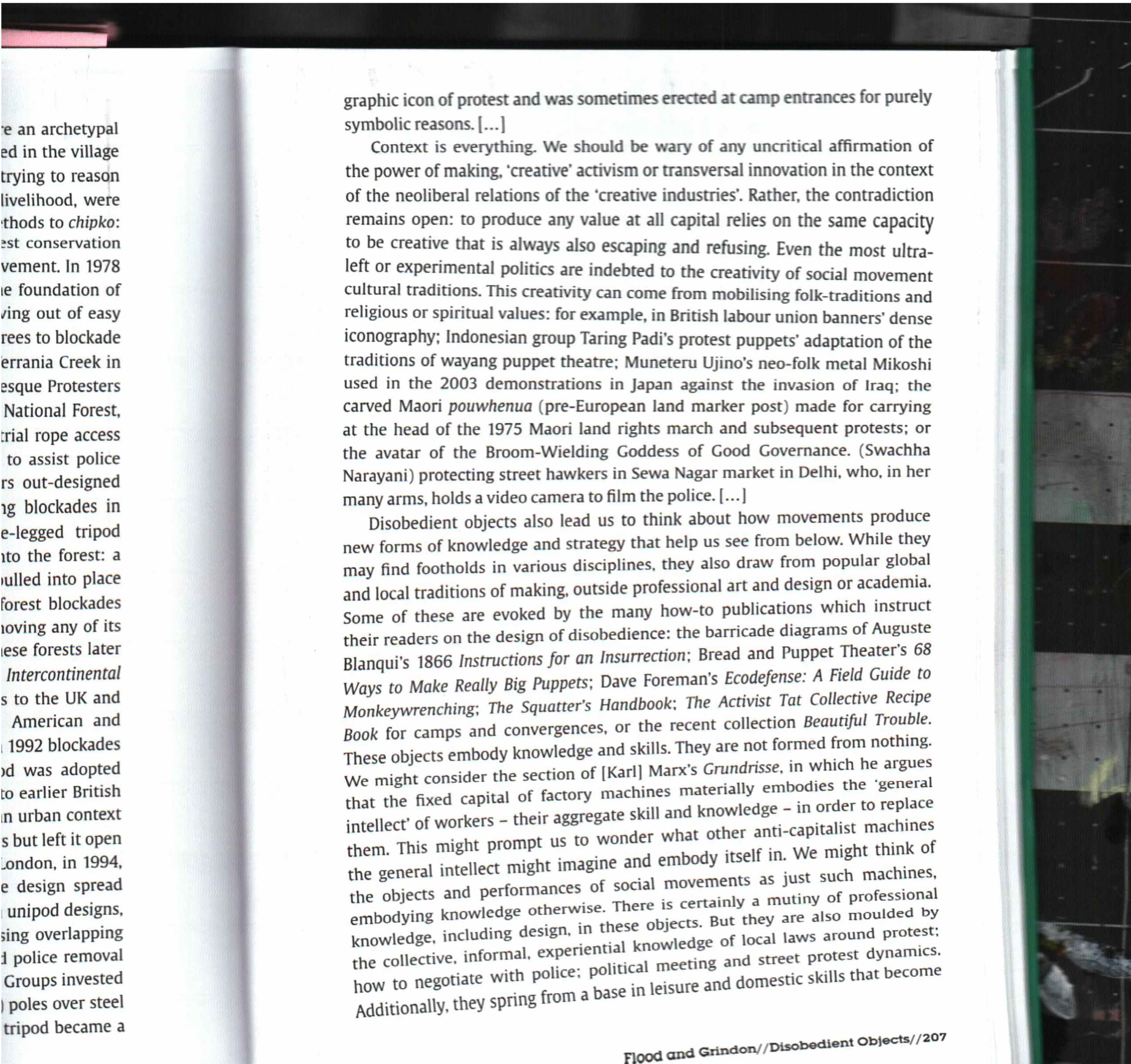
Context is everything. We
the power of making, 'creative'
of the neoliberal relations of the
remains open: to produce any
to be creative that is always also
left or experimental politics are
cultural traditions. This creativity
religious or spiritual values: for
iconography; Indonesian group
traditions of wayang puppet theatre
used in the 2003 demonstrations
carved Maori *pouwhenua* (pre-
at the head of the 1975 Maori land
the avatar of the Broom-Wielding
Narayani) protecting street hawkers
many arms, holds a video camera

Disobedient objects also lead
new forms of knowledge and
may find footholds in various
and local traditions of making,
Some of these are evoked by the
their readers on the design of
Blanqui's 1866 *Instructions for an*
Ways to Make Really Big Puppets;
Monkeywrenching; *The Squatter's*
Book for camps and convergences,
These objects embody knowledge
We might consider the section of
that the fixed capital of factory
intellect' of workers – their
them. This might prompt us to
the general intellect might
the objects and performances of
embodying knowledge otherwise.
knowledge, including design, in
the collective, informal, experiential
how to negotiate with police;
Additionally, they spring from a

EXCERPT 2:
"DISOBEDIENT OBJECTS"
page 4



Edited by Afonso Dias Ramos and Tom Snow
Documents of Contemporary Art



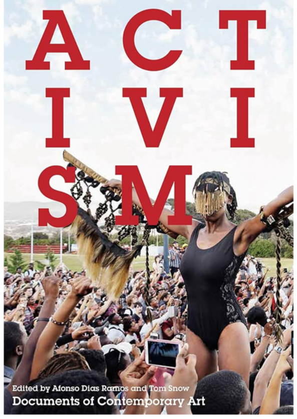
re an archetypal
ed in the village
trying to reason
livelihood, were
thods to *chipko*:
est conservation
vement. In 1978
ne foundation of
ving out of easy
rees to blockade
errania Creek in
esque Protesters
National Forest,
trial rope access
to assist police
rs out-designed
ng blockades in
e-legged tripod
nto the forest: a
pulled into place
forest blockades
noving any of its
nese forests later
Intercontinental
s to the UK and
American and
1992 blockades
od was adopted
to earlier British
n urban context
s but left it open
London, in 1994,
e design spread
unipod designs,
sing overlapping
d police removal
Groups invested
poles over steel
tripod became a

graphic icon of protest and was sometimes erected at camp entrances for purely symbolic reasons. [...]

Context is everything. We should be wary of any uncritical affirmation of the power of making, 'creative' activism or transversal innovation in the context of the neoliberal relations of the 'creative industries'. Rather, the contradiction remains open: to produce any value at all capital relies on the same capacity to be creative that is always also escaping and refusing. Even the most ultra-left or experimental politics are indebted to the creativity of social movement cultural traditions. This creativity can come from mobilising folk-traditions and religious or spiritual values: for example, in British labour union banners' dense iconography; Indonesian group Taring Padi's protest puppets' adaptation of the traditions of wayang puppet theatre; Muneteru Ujino's neo-folk metal Mikoshi used in the 2003 demonstrations in Japan against the invasion of Iraq; the carved Maori *pouwhenua* (pre-European land marker post) made for carrying at the head of the 1975 Maori land rights march and subsequent protests; or the avatar of the Broom-Wielding Goddess of Good Governance. (Swachha Narayani) protecting street hawkers in Sewa Nagar market in Delhi, who, in her many arms, holds a video camera to film the police. [...]

Disobedient objects also lead us to think about how movements produce new forms of knowledge and strategy that help us see from below. While they may find footholds in various disciplines, they also draw from popular global and local traditions of making, outside professional art and design or academia. Some of these are evoked by the many how-to publications which instruct their readers on the design of disobedience: the barricade diagrams of Auguste Blanqui's 1866 *Instructions for an Insurrection*; Bread and Puppet Theater's *68 Ways to Make Really Big Puppets*; Dave Foreman's *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*; *The Squatter's Handbook*; *The Activist Tat Collective Recipe Book* for camps and convergences, or the recent collection *Beautiful Trouble*. These objects embody knowledge and skills. They are not formed from nothing. We might consider the section of [Karl] Marx's *Grundrisse*, in which he argues that the fixed capital of factory machines materially embodies the 'general intellect' of workers – their aggregate skill and knowledge – in order to replace them. This might prompt us to wonder what other anti-capitalist machines the general intellect might imagine and embody itself in. We might think of the objects and performances of social movements as just such machines, embodying knowledge otherwise. There is certainly a mutiny of professional knowledge, including design, in these objects. But they are also moulded by the collective, informal, experiential knowledge of local laws around protest; how to negotiate with police; political meeting and street protest dynamics. Additionally, they spring from a base in leisure and domestic skills that become

EXCERPT 2:
"DISOBEDIENT OBJECTS"
page 5


ACT
IVI
SM
Edited by Afonso Dias Ramos and Tom Snow
Documents of Contemporary Art

political tools, from camping to knitting and sewing. Behind the design of tripods stand other changes in leisure and education, for example, the growth of climbing as a sporting activity and the growth of indoor walls in the 1980s, often appearing first in university gyms. Such knowledges are one example of what [Stefano] Harney and [Fred] Moten call 'the undercommons'. […] Its appearance in the museum echoes its role in the university: It cannot be denied that the university is a place of refuge and it cannot be accepted that the university is a place of enlightenment. In the face of these conditions one can only sneak into the university and steal what one can. To abuse its hospitality, to spite its mission, to join its refugee colony, its gypsy encampment, to be in but not of – this is the path of the subversive intellectual in the modern university. […]

---

[1] [Footnote 29 in source] Although this design spread, it was pre-dated or paralleled by similar architectural design solutions to resisting eviction, for example, the nets and scaffold towers of the anti-road building actions of Claremont Road, London, in 1994; the Sharpness nuclear train blockade of 1980 in Britain, or the wooden towers and barriers of the anti-nuclear Free Republic of Wendland, Germany, in 1980. Ian Cohen, *Green Fire* (Pymble, 1997) 199, Iain McIntyre (ed), *How to Make Trouble and Influence People* (Oakland, 2013) 154.

Catherine Flood and Gavin Grindon, extracts from 'Introduction' in *Disobedient Objects*, eds. Catherine Flood and Gavin Grindon, (London: V&A Publishing, 2014) 9, 14–19.

Judith Baca
Whose Monument
Cultured Society

[...] Using the term
images to mind in each of us
statues of the Italian
murals of Los Tres Grandes or
peoples. Someone said that the
the present to inspire the
from the mud of a place into the
be to investigate and reveal
'public site', marking our
As artists creating the
consider is, what shall we

Over the past twenty years
common legacy in public art is
which causes us to drag out the
and place them in the park
purpose was to evoke a time
of our forefathers' shifted the
inspire an awe of our great
over enemies. Running our
victories and became enlisted
colour they were not our
own people. […]

From the triumphant
which is the underside of
versions, we find examples of
daily presence in our lives,
the acts they represent.

The power of the
in front of the towering office
predecessors in the parks,
importance of the artist.
mediate between the public
public art' mentality, the
While percent-for-art bills